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SAFEGUARDING YOUR FOODS AND DRUGS -- No. 5.  
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U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

A series of radio talks by W. R. M. Wharton, chief, Eastern District, Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, delivered Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, through WJZ, New York, and the following other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company: KWK, St. Louis; WREN, Kansas City, KFAB, Lincoln, Nebr.; WRC, Washington; WBZA, Boston; KSTP, St. Paul; WSM, Nashville; WAPI, Birmingham; WJAX, Jacksonville; WPTF, Raleigh; WRVA, Richmond.

Good Morning, "Label Readers." Interest in my "Read Label Information" is tremendous. - Scores of community clubs are discussing the question, many hundreds of listeners have written for more information. The newspapers of the country are commenting editorially. One national journal says: "You have made a good move, Mr. Wharton, when the housewives of the country come to read labels they will judge the truthfulness of the statements seriously". My offer to send my talk on "How to Read Labels" and all subsequent comments on the same subject still holds. Write now. In this series of radio talks my friends, I am relating some of my personal experiences, and telling some of the human interest stories which these experiences have brought to light, - This, in order that you may know how your foods and drugs receive constant protection under the Federal Food and Drugs Act and I am giving you information on "How to Read Labels" intelligently in order that you may buy foods and drugs discriminatingly. In previous talks, I have told you facts about eliminating poisoning colors from coffee, about taking rotten eggs out of bakery cakes, about how a spice adulterator was caught by a novel method; about selling table salt at \$15,000 a pound, about fake egg substitutes, and I have emphasized the advantage to the consumer of learning to read labels.

Today, I shall tell you about freckle eaters and chicken cheaters, and I shall tell you more about How to Read Labels. Don't forget you may have copies of my label reading information for the asking.

The poultry dealers in the middle west buy live poultry by weight, and sell plucked poultry by weight. One fairly large operator, apparently finding profits too small in his estimation, conceived the idea that if he could increase the weight of his output of killed poultry, he would get rich faster. His greed, his facile mind, his vivid imagination, spurred him on to action. He had seen a hypodermic syringe used, and he knew that liquid injected into the flesh will remain there. He consulted a coppersmith, and together they worked out a syringe-like hose nozzle. This was attached to a hose and finally came into regular use in this establishment in the following fashion:

The hose with nozzle attached was connected to a water faucet. The water was turned on and each fowl carcass was then passed in front of an operator of the nozzle syringe, who carefully introduced the sharp point of the nozzle into the chicken's crop cavity, and this was allowed to fill with water. The birds then went into a refrigerator and, in this way, in excess of one-half pound of water (later turned into ice by freezing) was added to each bird; and, you, my friends, when your retail grocer weighed your purchase of fowl paid the price of chicken per pound- for one-half pound of ice- which was thrown away in the drawing process. You, Mrs Consumer, lost about twenty cents on each purchase. But how did the operator fare? Let's assume that his gain

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was ten cents for each bird. That is conservative. Let us figure the operator killed 2,000 fowl per day, and that he worked 200 days per year. Our calculation is simple:  $2,000 \times 200 \times .10$  cents equals \$40,000. illegitimate profit per year from adding water to poultry.

This operator did not last long. Your Federal Food and Drug Inspector, in his regular rounds, discovered the practice. Never mind how he discovered it - that's his job. He discovers such practices - and this manufacturer stopped it.

You may feel sure that, insofar as this form of make-weight cheaterly is concerned, the Federal Food and Drugs Act does not any longer permit it to occur.

We hear every now and then of freckle contests, and the awarding of prizes to the boy with the most freckles are an asset, but our young ladies consider them a distinct liability and would be rid of them if they could. This very natural desire on the part of young ladies with freckles - to be free from freckles - caused some enterprising manufacturers to develop preparations for their removal. Knowing that preparations which would have any real effect in removing freckles might remove the skin at the same time and might contain dangerous substances, an investigation was undertaken into the composition and labeling of these products.

I found a surprising number of such preparations on the market. They were variously labeled as "Freckle Removers", "Freckle Eaters", and the like; and the point of this story is they were also labeled as "Harmless". Now, chemical examination of many of them showed that they were composed in large part of Ammoniated Mercury, a harmful ingredient to the skin.

The Federal Food and Drugs Act was invoked; cases were instituted on the allegation that the labeling of these products as "Harmless" was false and these cases were successfully maintained in the Federal Courts. Consequently this class of products are no longer labeled as "Harmless".

My friends this is April first, or "All Fools' Day". I do not intend to try to fool you in any way but I want to tell you how a foreign candy manufacturer did try to fool you today. About ten days ago there arrived at one of our eastern ports from a foreign country a large consignment of a product, put up in fancy little packages and labeled: "Chocolate bon-bons", "Chocolate Beans", "Chocolate Truffles", and "Chocolate Sweetmeats". These looked all the world like regular chocolates. They were all real chocolate covered products but what do you suppose the centers of these chocolates were made of? Well, the chocolate beans contained centers with strong acetic acid, the chocolate truffles had wadded paper centers, the chocolate sweetmeats contained sawdust and other pieces had centers filled with salt, with cork, with mustard, and with wadded tinfoil. This shipment was intended to be sold on April first, or today, as joke candy. Your Uncle Sam who enforces the Food and Drugs Act at all ports of entry to exclude all adulterated food products, could not see the joke. These candies would have gone to your children and might have done them harm. Certainly, they would not have benefited in any way



from eating them. Consequently, the whole shipment was denied entry into the country and the practical jokers on this April Fools' Day will have to content themselves with other forms of amusement than handing out this joke candy, and I may tell you here that all foods and drugs offered for entry from foreign countries are inspected carefully at all American ports and millions of pounds are turned back each year as not fit for you consumers. Thus, does the Food and Drugs Act protect your food and drug supply.

You may believe that sirup labels tell the truth, for the enforcement of the Federal Food and Drugs Act insures truthful labeling on packages of sirups.

Do you know the difference between cane sirup and sugar sirup and corn sirup? And do you know the difference between molasses and refiners sirup? Let me tell you what these various commodities are, in order that you may differentiate one from another:-

Sugar sirup is a product made by dissolving sugar in water, and contains not more than 35 per cent of water. Cane sirup is a product made by the evaporation of the juice of sugar cane, and contains not more than 30 per cent of water. Molasses is the product left after separating sugar from concentrated cane juice, and molasses contains not more than 25 per cent of water. Refiners sirup is the residual liquid product obtained in the process of refining raw sugars, and contains not more than 25 per cent of water.

The term "drips" as previously used on Sirup labels, was applied to a high grade refiners sirup obtained as drippings from mush sugar. This term has lost its original meaning, and now has no particular significance except to indicate a Refiners Sirup. The same applies to the term "Golden Drips". Such a term in this country means only a golden colored refiners sirup.

Maple sirup is made by the evaporation of maple sap, or by dissolving maple sugar in water, and contains not more than 35 per cent of water and weighs not less than 11 lbs. to the gallon.

Glucose or Corn sirup is a sirupy product made by incompletely hydrolyzing starch, with subsequent evaporation of the liquid to a sirupy consistency.

Sorghum Sirup is a sirup made by the evaporation of juice obtained from the Sorghum plant, and contains not more than 30 per cent of water.

You will find all of these products on sale, labeled as such. If you wish to be sure of your choice of these products, insist upon being delivered a package labeled exactly according to what you have asked for.

Various mixtures of these sirups are made commercially and packages containing mixtures are labeled to show the kinds of sirups in the mixtures. There are likewise certain products which are called "Imitations", such an "Imitation Maple Sirup", which generally is a sugar sirup flavored with a mixture of extract of hickory bark and Fenugreek Seed, and other flavors.

My message to you, Label Readers, is to decide what you want, when buying sirups, insist upon being delivered the exact product you request, and "double check" by reading labels. Don't let your grocer give you something just as good. Let's teach the grocers that we know what we want, and that we want what we want when we want it.

If you want to learn how to read labels, if you wish to become a careful and discriminating buyer of foods, if you wish to save money in your marketing, if you want to be prepared to discuss label reading in your community clubs, write W. R. M. Wharton, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 201 Varick Street, New York City, for copies of his radio talks on "How to Read Labels".

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